



## News Releases from Region 01

# EPA Approves National Guard Request to Modify Training Restrictions; Cites Continued Emphasis on Protecting Cape Cod Aquifer

05/22/2017

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**BOSTON** - After soliciting and considering comments from the public, the U.S. EPA has approved a Massachusetts Army National Guard request to resume military training at Joint Base Cape Cod with oversight by the Massachusetts Environmental Management commission. Prior to this decision, EPA prohibited most training at the base due to threats to the drinking water source for the Upper Cape. The decision to allow the Army National Guard to resume certain training with oversight comes after a series of pilot projects that concluded this training could be done safely. Live fire of any ordnance at other ranges continues to be prohibited. EPA will continue to oversee all of the required cleanup currently underway at the Training Ranges and Impact Area, to address the contamination in groundwater and soil that resulted from previous training activities.

Today's action provides responsibility for the State to take the lead on overseeing and making decisions on individual requests for training using live firing or pyrotechnics at Joint Base Cape Cod. The Massachusetts Environmental Management Commission (EMC) has been significantly involved along with EPA in overseeing the training pilot projects to date, and Massachusetts EMC is committed to ensuring that training activities at the base are compatible with protecting the water supply and wildlife habitat.

"Through thoughtful engagement with the Massachusetts Army National Guard and the public, EPA is pleased to find a balance that allows our military to train to protect America at the same time we are all working together to protect our environment," said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.

"EPA and the Massachusetts National Guard have been working cooperatively over the last several years to create state-of-art environmental safeguards for our military training on Joint Base Cape Cod. We will continue to work closely with the EPA, MassDEP and all our partners to ensure our critical water source is protected while maintaining the best prepared military force that fulfills our federal and state mission," said Lt. Col. James Sahady, spokesman for the Massachusetts National Guard. "This advancement in our training capacity would not be possible without the committed engagement

of the Cape Cod residents who work closely with Joint Base Cape Cod. Engaged community members who make up the environmental Management Commission, the Community Advisory Council, the Science Advisory Council and the Military Civilian Community Council have been partners with Joint Base Cape Cod for years and their commitment often goes unrecognized."

Since 1997, EPA has issued four administrative orders to protect the sole-source Cape Cod Aquifer, three of which were done under the authority of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. The second Order included the suspension of particular military training activities at the Training Range and Impact Area of Massachusetts Military Reservation, which is the former name of Joint Base Cape Cod. However, the Order included a provision allowing the Guard to petition for modification of Order requirements.

Starting in 2007, EPA has approved individual pilot projects by the Guard to resume training with enhanced measures to protect further contamination of the groundwater leading to the Cape Cod Aquifer. Data from nine years of the training pilot indicate that training, used in conjunction with a robust set of environmental safeguards, should not harm the groundwater aquifer.

The specific modifications to the March 1997 administrative order are as follows:

- Modify Administrative Order 2 (AO2) to not prohibit firing of lead ammunition or other 'live' ammunition at Juliet, Kilo, and Tango ranges, to the extent it receives continued approval and oversight from EMC in accordance with the Environmental Performance Standards.
- Modify AO2 to not prohibit firing of lead ammunition or other 'live' ammunition at small arms ranges at or near the Training Range and Impact Area, to the extent it receives continued approval and oversight from EMC in accordance with the Environmental Performance Standards.
- Modify AO2 to not prohibit the use of pyrotechnic M116A1 Hand Grenade, the M228 fuse used with the M69 Hand Grenade, and the Percussion Activated Neutralizer, to the extent it receives continued approval and oversight from EMC in accordance with the Environmental Performance Standards.
- Modify AO2 to not prohibit all use of pyrotechnics at or near the Training Range and Impact Area, to the extent it receives approval and oversight from EMC in accordance with the Environmental Performance Standards.

To see the letter outlining this action click here ([semspub.epa.gov/src/document/01/591554](https://www.epa.gov/semspub/document/01/591554))

(11 pp, 2.8 MB, [About PDF](#)).

For more info on Otis Air National Guard Base/Camp Edwards click here ([www.epa.gov/superfund/otis](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/otis)).

LAST UPDATED ON MAY 22, 2017